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ALESSANDRO MATTIA: AGOSTINO CHIGI
Fine Arts Gallery, San Diego, California

ANNOUNCING

A SPECIAL EDITION OF *ART IN AMERICA*
FOR OCTOBER, 1944, ON

American Art Collections

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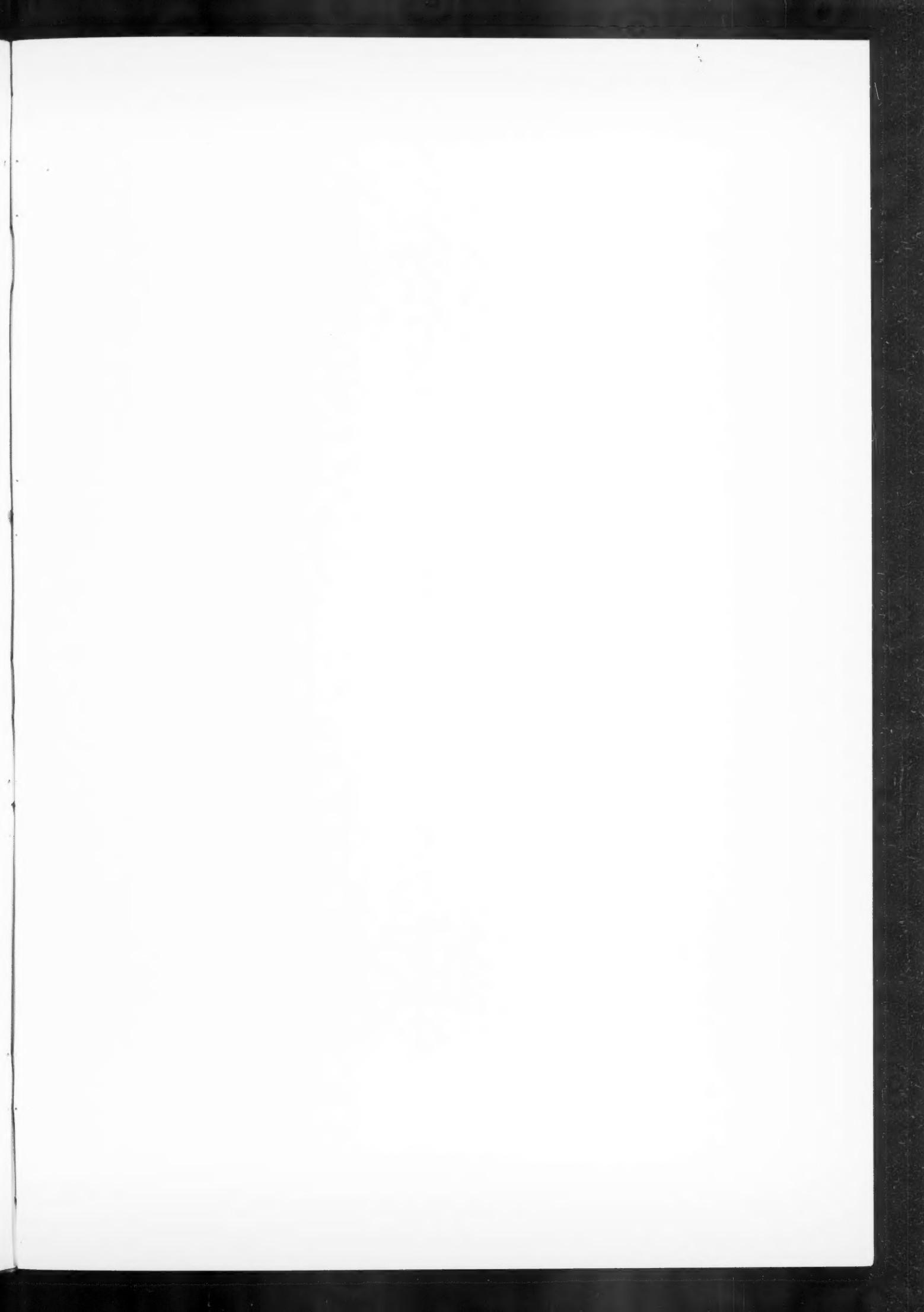




FIG. I. ECCE HOMO
Prisca Church, Tasco

A R T I N A M E R I C A
AN ILLUSTRATED QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
VOLUME XXXII JULY, 1944 NUMBER 3



RELIGIOUS SCULPTURE OF COLONIAL MEXICO

By PAL KELEMEN
Norfolk, Connecticut

Baroque, although it was a most powerful and widespread movement in both hemispheres, has long been looked upon with depreciation, if not completely ignored. But the closing of one's eyes before a grand spectacle does not obliterate the performance; and if we hope to understand the past and, through it, the present of Latin America, appropriate emphasis must be given to those centuries in which Baroque flourished there. Just as a coloratura singer belongs in a grand opera company, so Baroque has a worthy place in the pageant of architectural styles.

Besides its architecture which lavishly employed plastic decorations of stone and stucco, sculpture in wood was a widely practised art that was likewise brought to dramatic heights. With Alonso Berruguete (1486-1561), the Spanish school of sculpture reached such virtuosity that it rivaled that of Italy. The great sculptors of the 17th and 18th centuries, Martinez Montañés and Alonso Cano, added a realistic touch to the almost

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Michelangelesque perfection of the earlier master. The appealing and humanly warm attitude of the Renaissance gave place to the expression of asceticism, agony, ecstasy. Frequently the holy figures of this period are life-size or even larger, sometimes with eyes made of glass, real eyelashes and hair, and rich robes that are actual textiles. A tinted, waxy finish, applied to represent flesh, produces an effect that is theatrical, especially by flickering candlelight.

Such statues were not necessarily intended only to decorate an altar or stand in the niche of a church; many were carried through the streets in religious processions. Certain festivals which marked a Patron Saint's day, celebrated the Easter holidays or a military victory grew to be veritable spectacles of the first order. Court, military, and civil functionaries, in addition to the clergy, marched in splendid gala while the dazzled populace framed the pageant. Reliquaries, banners, lanterns, and candles were carried by gorgeously caparisoned knights of the Church as well as by the lay orders. Masters of the guilds participated with their emblems, and the sound of orchestras and the chanting of choirs mingled with the clouds of incense arising from heavy silver censers. The custom survived the Inquisition and, as late as the middle '30's of this century, spectators from foreign countries crowded into Sevilla, Toledo, and other cities of Spain on holy days to witness the celebration.

This custom, so powerful in the Motherland, was transplanted in its full vigor to the colonies of the New World. In this hemisphere the Church intensified its efforts in all its activities; while in Europe the Inquisition had to fight only heretics, here a heathen continent had to be brought within the realm of the Cross. Although the Indian had a great artistic past of his own, his concepts had been developed in isolation on completely different religious and social lines from those of the Spaniard; he was ignorant of European iconography. His pantheon was populated by numerous gods — of Wind, Rain, Maize, Flowers, War, and Death, to mention a few.

In his former religion, however, he had been accustomed to long and colorful celebrations, sacrifices, evocations, and to processions and pilgrimages. The ceremonies performed by the chief priests — Maya, Aztec, or Inca — as they stood on their temple heights, laden with gold and blood and wreathed in copal smoke, were not easily forgotten. Those barbaric and often savage rites had been ingrained into the lives of these peoples for too many centuries to be rooted out easily.

The complexity of the problem facing the Christian Church is revealed not only in the strict discipline meted out during this conversion period, and even later, but also in the art of the Spanish colonies. In interpreting for the Indian the life of Christ or of one of the saints, the drama, the spectacle had to be overemphasized to convey even a fraction of the idea. Thus were created — in great measure by anonymous artists — statues with an amazing story-telling quality, through which the onlooker, by observation alone, could grasp at the idea behind the material. Little wonder that exaggeration appeared in the Colonial art of this region, where churches of another civilization had to be erected and maintained in a reluctant landscape after the heathen temples had been destroyed.

From the mass of the truly artistic statuary of Colonial Mexico a sufficient number has survived to give us an idea of the great richness of plastic *comparserie*, which once, centuries ago, played such an important rôle in the life of that country.

The figure of Saint John the Evangelist, the upper half of which is reproduced here (Fig. 2), introduces effectively the dramatic realism just discussed. The entire figure stands nearly $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet high. It is somewhat static, but the face transmits a feeling of real evangelistic zeal. The eyes, made of glass, mirror varying lights and shadows; the mouth is half open, as if speaking. Consistent with the emotional and realistic character of the style, a special treatment, known as *encarnación* (investment with flesh), was applied to the faces and hands of such wooden statutes, which could be executed either with a brilliant or a matt surface. Carved garments were embellished by a covering of gold leaf; then, with a blunt tool, the artist marked out patterns of brocade, filled in the colors, and left the rest in shining gold. This technique, called *estofado* (painting on gilt), had been practised in Mexico since the 16th century but it did not come to its full development until the 18th. Our photograph shows the elaborate finish in all its meticulous detail.

A different type is seen in the Saint Christopher (Fig. 3). It also is of wood, colored but without a spot of gilding anywhere. At the end of the 17th century, Baroque art was so deeply rooted in the rich Mexican soil that when the Bourbons succeeded the Habsburgs to the throne of Spain, Rococo — that flower of the 18th century — could not considerably change the language of the arts in this country. However, our Saint Christopher, $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet high, has little of the heavy-blooded monumentality found in many of the smaller statues of the Baroque period. The work



FIG. 2. SAINT JOHN THE EVANGELIST
Cathedral Museum, Mexico City



FIG. 3. SAINT CHRISTOPHER
Cathedral Museum, Mexico City



FIG. 4. SAN PEDRO DE ALCANTARA
Cathedral Museum, Mexico City

differs greatly from the usual presentation of the subject: instead of the conventional figure of a cumbersome, white-bearded old man in heavy robes, this Christopher is young and lean. The trousers rolled above the knee make his figure appear still taller and more lithe; mobile treatment of the drapery conveys the sense of his striding through wind and water. There is a pastoral quality about the whole piece which is in the spirit of the Rococo.

The 17th century masters of Spanish plastic, Pedro de Mena and Alonso Cano, brought surrealism in some of their statues almost to paroxysm. The features of San Pedro de Alcantara shown here (Fig. 4), a nearly life-size polychrome wood carving, are evidently influenced by Mena's representation of the same character, now in the Museum of Barcelona. This Spanish saint of the 16th century, a conscientious follower of Saint Francis of Assisi, lived a rather peaceful life, without torture or martyrdom. Tradition has it that "his love of God was so ardent as to cause him sensible pain and frequently rapt him into ecstacy." Thus it is a purely spiritual experience that is communicated here with such gripping power as to suggest today real physical suffering. The transfixed glassy eyes, the exhausted open mouth, the cheeks haggard from inward torment, and the distended veins of the throat give the piece a disturbing fascination.

The Christ who reached Mexico across the great ocean was neither the aristocrat of Italian churches nor the transcendental manifestation of Gothic countries. The Christ of Mexico exhibits especially marks of the realism sprung from the blood-drenched earth of the Inquisition. A tortured, terribly human Christ, revealing the weakness of a broken body and bleeding from His crown of thorns, spoke to His Indian converts through the power of human emotion, without the necessity of language.

The "Ecce Homo" shown in Fig. 1 stands on a side altar of the Prisca Church at Tasco — a mid-18th century structure, one of the finest examples of Mexico's Colonial splendor. The breast of the Christ is covered with *milagros*, or votive offerings, and the flowers at His feet, both real and artificial, are also gifts of the flower-loving natives. A pompous background, with garlands and angels of almost pagan ebullience, contrasts startlingly with the somber and majestic figure.

In the same church there is another statue "Our Lord of the Pillar," in which the Christ is bound with real cords and blood marks His hands and body. A crown of real thorns encircles His head. The combination of the realistic and the conventionalized seen in these examples is found also in



FIG. 7. LA PURÍSIMA BY MANUEL TOLSA OR PUPIL
Cathedral Museum, Mexico City



FIG. 6. LA PURÍSIMA
Cathedral Museum, Mexico City

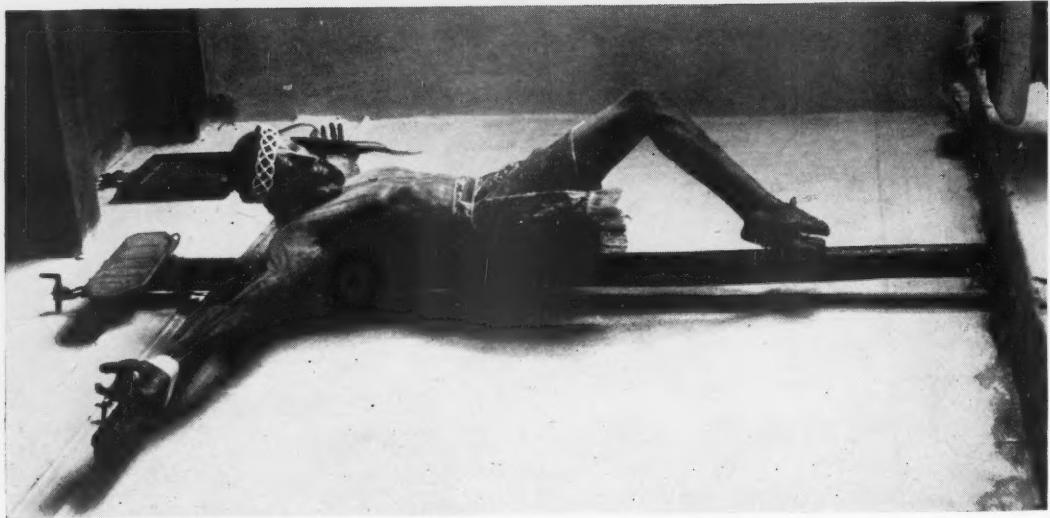


FIG. 5. CRUCIFIX
Parish Church, Xochimilco

the *santos* statuettes of our own Southwest, where Epigoni of this same school — simple farming and herding folk of the mountain villages in New Mexico — practised their art until recently.

To a certain degree, the Crucifix in the church at Xochimilco (Fig. 5) belongs also to the category of folk-art. The edifice is one of the oldest in the country, dating from the end of the 16th century, and is full of time-stained pictures and figures. The crucified Christ here illustrated wears a crown of beads instead of thorns, as previously seen. Real hair clings matted to His brow. His pierced palms are bound to the wooden cross-piece by a white cloth; His loins are wrapped in a scarf of a figured Indian textile, in pattern and color similar to the garments worn on windy mornings and cool evenings in the high Valley of Mexico. This sagging body, its veins swollen with agony, was for the Indians the body of a man who became God, as in centuries past the heroes of their fathers had become identified with the God of War; the anatomy of the figure would suggest an Indian artist who carved the new deity in his own image. The Christ of Europe, draped in diaphanous veils, has indeed traveled a long road to appear here in the garb of the children of the Aztec.

A comparatively modern subject in Christian art is the Virgin of the Immaculate Conception. The Woman of the Apocalypse was taken as her model, described in Revelations "with the moon under her feet and upon her head a crown." "La Purisima" (Fig. 6), a small statue about $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet high, is a fine example of Mexican Baroque, even if in a somewhat damaged condition. Her crown disappeared, her left hand was broken in the turmoils of this land before she came to rest in the quiet Museum of the Cathedral in Mexico City. Here the same rich *estofado* technique can be observed as in Fig. 2 and the porcelain covering of face and hand is especially lifelike. A vertical trend is followed in the sculptured lines of the principal garment, but, in the loose drapery that floats away from the right arm and loops above the new moon on the other side, a diagonal movement is introduced that enlivens the sculptural effect. The three cherubs in the clouds at the base of the figure, with their wings neatly folded like collars, are iconographically indispensable and add considerable charm to the representation.

With the second half of the 18th century, a placid formalism settled over the arts of Europe, leading to the Neoclassic. The convolutes and the curves of Baroque quieted down, the broken and irregular pediments became once more geometrically correct and cold. Spain, with its shaky

Bourbonism, fell into line also, and there, in this uninspired academism but with sound craftsmanship, grew up Manuel Tolsa, architect and sculptor. At the invitation of the Viceroy of Mexico, he arrived in that country in 1791, age 34, knowing his Palladio and his Bernini. But here, in a tropical landscape, where Baroque was still vigorous, his Neoclassic leanings did not evoke an echo. Here, no outstanding buildings had been born out of the great inspiration of Romanesque, Gothic, and Renaissance, as they came successively to full flower; and in the 17th and 18th centuries an all-powerful Baroque had modified and built to its taste. Little stimulus existed for eclecticism.

Thus Tolsa, who, as a full-blooded artist, may always have had an inclination towards this much more emotional and dynamic style, willy-nilly turned to it, manifesting in the works he executed in Mexico an interesting double trend.

Tolsa's name is worthily perpetuated in Mexico in a number of buildings erected after his plans, but especially in the equestrian statue of Charles IV of Spain, which easily ranks among the ten best of its kind. In the United States, however, he is all too little known and deserves the attention of the coming art-historian.

Our second "Purisima" (Fig. 7) is attributed to Tolsa or to one of his pupils. A comparison of the two Virgins is revealing. In this statue ultra-Baroque elements are no longer evident. The almost too-heavy drapery of the other piece is gone and the whole figure is much more slender. There is, however, still considerable movement in the cloak. The new moon is promoted to greater prominence; the base of clouds is lighter, in full keeping with the figure. The head of the Madonna inclines to her right instead of to her left, and the carriage of her body is more closely knit. The whole composition has a more floating quality. In general, the figure suggests more calm, spiritual as well as physical, and the pose is more celestial, when measured by Murillo's standard.

The painting of the statue is of recent date and shows the influence of commercialized models. But this factor detracts only slightly from our enjoyment of the exquisite wood carving which has expression, poise, and individuality in goodly measure.

One feels, however, a suggestion of the glossy serenity that is about to descend over churchly figures all over the world. With the coming of the industrial age, most ecclesiastical statuary was produced by machine-made molds, and those bisque statues, with their synthetic expression, artificial

coloring, and overrestricted movement, have nothing of the true artistic sincerity of their predecessors.

By this time, too, political and social conditions were changing in Mexico, and the inspirational atmosphere that fostered this style was being dissipated. So the curtain falls on a uniquely dramatic art, once the conveyor of a truly spiritual message.

A LETTER FROM ALVAN FISHER

Reprinted with Notes

BY ALAN BURROUGHS
Little Compton, Rhode Island

"I was born," Alvan Fisher wrote in answer to Dunlap's request for facts,¹ "on the 9th of August 1792 in the town of Needham, County of Norfolk, State of Massachusetts. While young I left that town for Dedham where my connections have resided, and some continue to reside to this day, therefore, I have always hailed from Dedham. Until past eighteen years of age I was engaged in a country store; and greatly against the wishes of my friends (who intended that I should go into a mercantile counting room in this place), determined to be a painter—a fondness for which business the account books of the store in which I was engaged could most abundantly prove, could they be found: they probably would somewhat resemble the old illuminated manuscripts."

Writing at the age of about forty, the artist thus began a letter which suggests in a subtle way the precise and friendly nature of one who was quite contented with his way of life. He was the fourth of six brothers, all of whom were successful in different fields, the youngest, John Dix Fisher, being a well-known physician in Boston. Those friends who wished Alvan to go into business seem to have been correct in estimating his ability. At this time he was about to invest \$13,000, made through sales of pictures. When the Eastern Lands business collapsed, he won back a small fortune by shrewd speculation of the money he continued to earn from painting. In 1857 he sold at auction sixty-five genre and landscape compositions which brought \$3,134.50.² He had long been adept at marketing his talent, one of his first commissions being to journey through the

¹Dunlap, *History of the Arts of Design*, Ed. 1918, v. III, p. 32.

²Priced catalogue in the possession of Mrs. Sumner Brown, Dedham, Mass., whose kindness in furnishing material on her great grandfather's career must be fully appreciated. Among other descendants of the Fisher family, Mrs. Frank A. Sullivan, Westerly, R. I., and Mr. Horace Cecil Fisher, Brookline, Mass., have interesting paintings.



FIG. I. ALVAN FISHER: FIREGUARD, 1813
Mrs. Sumner Brown, Dedham, Mass.

South painting famous horses for "an association of gentlemen in New York."³ His habitual neatness of mind and careful management are shown by the many exact references to time and place, found in his sketchbooks, and also by a meticulous plan of the ground and fruit trees on "Alvan Fisher's land in Dedham 1841," where are recorded the positions of every tree — Greening, Pear Cattan, Plum G(reen) Gage, etc. — and the places for successive plantings. A clear thinker and reasoner, his closest attention, wrote one who knew him well,³ was directed to governmental affairs and the business of the day. But let Fisher continue his letter:

"In consequence of this determination to be an artist, I was placed with a Mr. Penniman, who was an excellent ornamental painter, with him I remained upwards of two years. From him I acquired a style which required years to shake off — I mean a mechanical ornamental touch, and manners of coloring."

John Ritto Penniman, as Dunlap noted, was more than an ornamental painter; his *Last Supper* in the Old North Church, Boston, and his city views show the range of his talent. In spite of a limited technique, he must have given Fisher respectable ideas about paintings. This can be illustrated by a Fireguard (Fig. 1), mounted on low trestle feet within a simulated frame, which was signed by Fisher in 1813. Wherever the sub-

³Obituary notice, *Norfolk County (Mass.) Journal*, 1863, Feb. 21.



FIG. 2. ALVAN FISHER: BARN INTERIOR
Mrs. Sumner Brown, Dedham, Mass.

life, winter pieces, portraits of animals, etc. This species of painting being novel in this part of the country, I found it a more lucrative, pleasant and distinguishing branch of art than portrait painting, which I then pursued."

His early portraits, nevertheless, were not only sensitive but canny, if one can judge by the most personal of subjects for a young artist (Fig. 3). The likeness appears with more depth and reserve of characterization than in the early work of Chester Harding, for example, or of Francis Alexander, and has none of the Stuart influence which appeared in some of the work of James Frothingham. About the time the portraits of Fisher's parents were painted, Harding had not yet come to Boston, and Alexander was still on the farm. In an unassuming way Fisher's portraiture was independent, although admittedly not as novel as his work in genre.

That barnyard scenes and portraits of animals could be novel, may seem odd in view of the fact that paintings by Morland, Berghem, Coninxloo and others had been collected in this country for several years.⁴ But

⁴See *Boston Columbian Sentinel*, 1817, Aug. 2; and the catalogue of Henry Sargent's exhibition at the Columbian Gallery, New York, 18c2, April 6.

ject matter may have been derived, the pastoral mood is distinctive; and several details, such as the relaxed figure of the horseman, the face of the herdsman and the barking dog, were studied with care. The lapses in proportion may be overlooked because of the successful lighting of the whole, which is more true to life than appears in reproduction.

"In 1814," Fisher wrote, "I commenced being artist, by painting portraits at a cheap rate. This I pursued until 1815. I then began painting a species of pictures which had not been practiced much, if any, in this country, viz: barnyard scenes and scenes belonging to rural



FIG. 3. ALVAN FISHER: LUCY STEDMAN FISHER
Mrs. Sumner Brown, Dedham, Mass.



FIG. 4. ALVAN FISHER: SELF-PORTRAIT, 1837 (water color)
Harry Stone, New York

it is unquestionably true that genre had not been "practiced much, if any," in this country. It was not generally practiced until Fisher and then William S. Mount had shown the way. The present moment is too short to discuss Fisher's development in this "species of pictures." However, the contrast between Fig. 1 and Fig. 2, an undated but obviously late work, will show the stylistic range. The range of subject matter extends from the equine "portrait" of *American Eclipse* (Harry T. Peters, New York), dated 1823,⁵ to *The Young Cit, Ruralizing*, and *Happy New Year, or going to see grandmamma in a sleigh with jingles*, listed in the 1857 auction sale; and it includes story pictures such as *Waiting for the Master's Return, the dogs followed the footsteps of their master to the sea side, at his departure to the fishing, since which a gale has commenced — hence their anxious look out for his return.* In the same sale was *Self-Respect and Impertinence*, evidently a study of dogs in the vein of Sir Edwin Landseer who, though a decade younger than Fisher, was already well known when Fisher made a brief visit to England, a trip that was evidently financed by portrait commissions:

"I continued this course until 1819-20, when I gradually resumed portrait painting, which I have practised more or less to this time, so that at present my principal business is portraiture. It is seldom that I am without orders for painting other than portraits. April 1825 I visited Europe. During my absence I travelled in England, France, Switzerland and Italy, visiting all that an artist usually visits. My journey in Switzerland was made on foot, the only way a traveller can see that picturesque country. In Paris I studied drawings at a private life academy, and made copies from the old masters in the gallery of the Louvre."

They were good copies, too, judged by that of the central figure in Terborch's *Concert*, in the possession of his great granddaughter. His sketchbook of 1825 contains fragmentary studies from Berghem, Rubens (*Helene Fourment with Her Children*), Giordano Luca (as he noted the name), Vanni Francesco, and Albane. But a sketchbook of the following year, inscribed "Alvan Fisher, Boston, des Etats-Unis d'Amerique du Nord," contains chiefly memos of foreign landscape views.

It is odd that Fisher nowhere in his letter to Dunlap mentions his work in landscape. He did add, after the statement about copying in the Louvre: "Previously to my going abroad I travelled and painted in many parts of this country." But that is only a vague indication of his almost continuous interest in nature. A sketchbook of 1817, inscribed "Fancy" in ornate script, must mark his first efforts to derive art from out-of-doors. The first

⁵Exhibited at the Metropolitan Museum, New York, *Life in America*, 1939, No. 17.



FIG. 5. ALVAN FISHER: SUGAR LOAF MOUNTAIN, 1821
Victor Spark, New York



FIG. 6. ALVAN FISHER: OLD SWAN HOMESTEAD, 1860
Mrs. Sumner Brown, Dedham, Mass.

wash drawing is marked "Experiment but from Nature." The second bears the comment "Miserable but from Nature." The third, a water color, is simply marked "Nonsense." And most of them are indeed slight achievements. But he plugged ahead, noting frequently whether the effort was from nature or from recollection.

In 1818 he signed a view of Providence Cove (Rhode Island Historical Society), which he painted for the saloon of a packet sloop plying between Providence and New York, thereby proving that he could handle a panorama with an airy sense of space and delicate detail. In 1819 he was able to advertise in Charleston, S. C.⁶ "a number of highly finished original Landscape Paintings from Northern Scenery." Landscapes predominate in the catalogues of Fisher's work. He was especially successful with Niagara Falls, of which he made a wash drawing in 1820; two versions, painted for J. A. Alston of Georgetown, were shown by Morse in Charleston in 1821; two others were exhibited there in 1823; many others exist, including two now owned by Chester Harding's granddaughter,⁷ which probably testify to the friendly relations between Harding and Fisher. They frequently visited Thompson's Tavern in North Conway, N. H., on sketching trips along with Thomas Doughty. A fastidious record of one of these trips is the water color of Fisher with a dead deer (Fig. 4), signed by himself in 1837 and inscribed on the reverse, "the artist at North Conway, N. H."

Many of Fisher's landscapes were "portraits" of places. Yet others were wholly imaginative. He himself made the distinction in his titles, labelling a view of "Mount Monadnoc — Painted directly from Nature," while he catalogued an unnamed view as *Original Composition*, or compressed an effect into the title, *Ray of Sunlight in a Dark Day*. Even a definite location, such as Sugar Loaf Mountain near Deerfield (Fig. 5), could be so glimpsed from the depths of a mysterious forest that it becomes almost fantastic. An eerie, impersonal quality is scaled to a feeling of awe, probably under the influence of Washington Allston's idealized story-landscapes. Fisher's view of Sugar Loaf nevertheless remains real in its synthesized setting; and it is interesting that the date for this ambitious work is 1821, at which time Thomas Doughty, pioneer of native landscapists, was only just beginning to paint in Pennsylvania.

⁶Miss Anna Wells Rutledge has contributed an extensive list of references to Fisher culled from the Charleston, S. C., newspapers.

⁷Miss Eliza Orne White, Brookline, Mass., who also owns an early *View of Springfield* by Fisher.



FIG. 7. ALVAN FISHER: ALVAN JOSIAH FISHER
Mrs. Sumner Brown, Dedham, Mass.

Toward the end of his life Fisher became increasingly concerned with the moods of nature and inclined more and more to an intimate, caressing treatment. The 1860 view of *The Old Swan Homestead* (Fig. 6) has a breadth and richness of light and shadow which contrast with the popular conception of landscapes as records of the untamed grandeur of nature. His last painting, preserved by his great granddaughter, foretells the later work of Inness to some degree in that it is composed of masses of misty, autumnal tones which almost obscure factual details.

After returning from abroad, Fisher noted:

"I have made Boston my home, and generally resided there, and am, I suppose, permanently fixed there for life. I believe, Sir, that you have not seen a class of my paintings, such for example as the 'Escape of Seargent Champ,' 'Mr. Dustin saving children from the savages,' 'The Freshet,' 'Lost Boy' etc. As these paintings ,and many of like character were painted to order for gentlemen in this city, it is this class of pictures which have been as advantageous as any other to my reputation as an artist."

As a matter of subsequent record, Fisher's reputation did not rest heavily upon story subjects. He painted a great many portraits in Boston and introduced a gay, flowery manner of painting children with pets, which must have delighted fond parents; the influence of Sir Thomas Lawrence is evident. Over the same period he continued to portray elderly people in a matter-of-fact, business-like spirit. The portrait of his son Alvan Josiah, painted about 1840 (Fig. 7), combines both attitudes and suggests the sensitiveness of his best work in this field.

His reputation had grown rapidly. As early as 1828 he was invited along with Allston, Stuart, Harding, Peale and Sargent to represent Boston in a projected volume of Biographical Sketches of American Artists.⁸ A popular gift book, "The Token," had three engravings after Fisher's paintings in the 1829 volume. In 1831 the Boston Athenaeum awarded him a prize of \$200 for *The Freshet*. Similar successes are suggested by the frequency of Fisher's exhibitions in Charleston, S. C., as in 1837, 1838, 1840 and 1842. In 1856 the Massachusetts Charitable Mechanic Association awarded him a Gold Medal. Long before he retired to Dedham he was an artist of national eminence.

Yet the concluding paragraph of his letter to Dunlap, written some

⁸A printed announcement with letter written below and on the inside pages, in the possession of Mrs. Sumner Brown. The artists selected were listed by cities, and there followed a list of poets and novelists to be included. Note that the "Boston" Peale was Rembrandt, who had been a visitor there shortly before 1828. A similar letter, addressed to Hon. Gulian C. Verplanck, is in the New York Historical Society. According to Miss Dorothy C. Barck, the writer may have been Sherman Converse, Yale 1813, who was an editor and publisher in New York.

thirty years before his death in 1863, makes a typically modest summary of his career:

"I do not know that I have communicated anything which can interest the public; my life has been without striking incident; it has been what I apprehend to have been the life of most of the American artists, a life of toil, seeking the realization of a dream—of hope and disappointment—of cloud and sunshine, so that it is difficult, perhaps, to say whether I was wise or foolish in choosing a profession."

This is the epitaph of one who, in spite of fame, "had a sensitive horror of anything in the nature of puffery."³

ZURBARAN, RIGHT AND WRONG

By MARTIN S. SORIA
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I

In a recent article on the Spanish master Francisco de Zurbaran (1598-1664) I pointed out that only about a dozen of his paintings are in the United States.¹ It is therefore a privilege to add to the oeuvre of Zurbaran and to reproduce for the first time the *Virgin and Child with a Fruit Dish*, an important painting just acquired by the well-known Cuban collector, Honorable Oscar B. Cintas of Havana and New York. This painting has remained hidden in provincial English collections and has never been published.²

Perhaps the most outstanding quality of the *Virgin and Child with a Fruit Dish* (Fig. 1) is its luminous color scale. The Virgin, in vivid light red and deep blue, faces to the right, with her head bent toward the spectator. On her lap, turned left, stands the Child, in white and blue, the colors of innocence. His left hand rests clumsily on an apple which the Virgin is holding out to Him. Further color is added at the right by a pewter dish full of fruit on a table covered with dark red velvet. These

My sincerest thanks are due to Miss Eleanor B. Swenson of the Brooklyn Museum who read and greatly simplified the manuscript.

¹In *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, "Francisco de Zurbaran, a Study of his Style," January and March, 1944.

²The painting was brought to New York by a dealer who had purchased it at an auction in London. Previously it had been in the collection of Bertram Downman, Bridport, Isle of Wight, and later in that of Hilda Lady Seeley, King's Manor, Freshwater, Isle of Wight. The measurements are 56 x 43 inches (142 x 109 cm).



FIG. I. FRANCISCO DE ZURBARAN: VIRGIN AND CHILD WITH A FRUIT DISH
Hon. Oscar B. Cintas, New York and Havana



FIG. 2. FRANCISCO DE ZURBARAN: STILL LIFE WITH PEARS IN A CHINA BOWL
Joseph Brummer, New York

hues are balanced by the green back of Mary's chair at the left. The painting has a plain light-gray background; all non-essentials are eliminated.

Characteristic of Zurbaran is the great solidity and three dimensional power of the figures. Although the Virgin's arm is parallel to the picture surface, the whole figure seems to push out toward the observer. But the solid shapes of the bodies are not entirely separated from the enveloping space; on the contrary Zurbaran attempted and very nearly succeeded in achieving pictorial unity of the group within the surrounding atmosphere. The composition is stabilized by the master's favorite vertical axes. These are accented by the light which seems to be concentrated on the Child in His resplendent white and on the upper arm of the Virgin. The big circle formed by the heads bent toward each other, the arms, and the two hands touching the apple, establish in our mind the inseparable spiritual bond between mother and son.

The picture as a whole and every detail of the costume and still life are painted with pronounced realism. The Virgin is clothed in folds of the utmost plastic power, folds drawn with the greatest care and sensitivity.

They have a dull metallic sheen, a sense of precision and of inner tension, as if hammered from heavy lead. Those furrows possess a life of their own as well as a monumentality which contrasts sharply with the playful, rippling folds of the Child's robe. The master's precise draftsmanship is evident in the almost horizontal line, very crisp and Zurbaranesque, marking the border of the Virgin's blue cloak. And it imparts style to the firm and linear modeling of her hand with its long thumb and characteristic pose.

Particularly impressive in its luminosity is the still life, a detail which Zurbaran so often included in his representations of the Virgin: the glowing oranges and lemons in their circled ripeness stimulate our tactile sense to the highest degree. The same feeling exists in a painting in the private collection of Mr. J. Brummer, New York, a *Still Life with Pears in a China Bowl* (Fig. 2). This painting is about contemporary with the Virgin and Child in the Cintas Collection and shows the same powerful plasticity of the fruit, the same hair-fine draftsmanship. An earlier signed *Still Life*, of 1633, in the Count Contini Bonacossi Collection, Rome, should also be cited for comparison.

In the Cintas painting the gentle face of the Virgin forms an unexpected contrast to the mood of strength created by the rigid composition, the powerful plasticity of the folds, and the intense color. This contrast between faces and folds, between gentleness and strength expresses most pointedly the conflict between the two main forces moving Zurbaran's brush: realism in the Caravaggio manner was the keynote of his early works, while he later became more and more of a mystic. Both elements are, however, always present to some extent in his art.³

In order better to understand Zurbaran's art, it may be helpful to compare the Virgin and Child to a painting by the other great Sevillian master, Murillo. The *Santiago Madonna* of about 1670 recently acquired by the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 3), like all mature works by Murillo is painted in the urban and elegant tradition of Correggio, Rubens, and Van Dyck. The painting suggests Rembrandt in the richness and variety of the golden halftones, and the atmospheric treatment of Murillo contrasts very much with Zurbaran's firm drawing. The first portrayed a lady, the second a girl from the fields of Extremadura. The Baby as painted by Zurbaran is a realistic Spanish country child with pudgy cheeks, affected by neither Italianate idealism nor the incomparable grace and elegance of Murillo's children. In contrast to the subdued colors,

³See *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, January and March, 1944.



FIG. 3. BARTOLOMÉ ESTEBAN MURILLO; SANTIAGO MADONNA
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

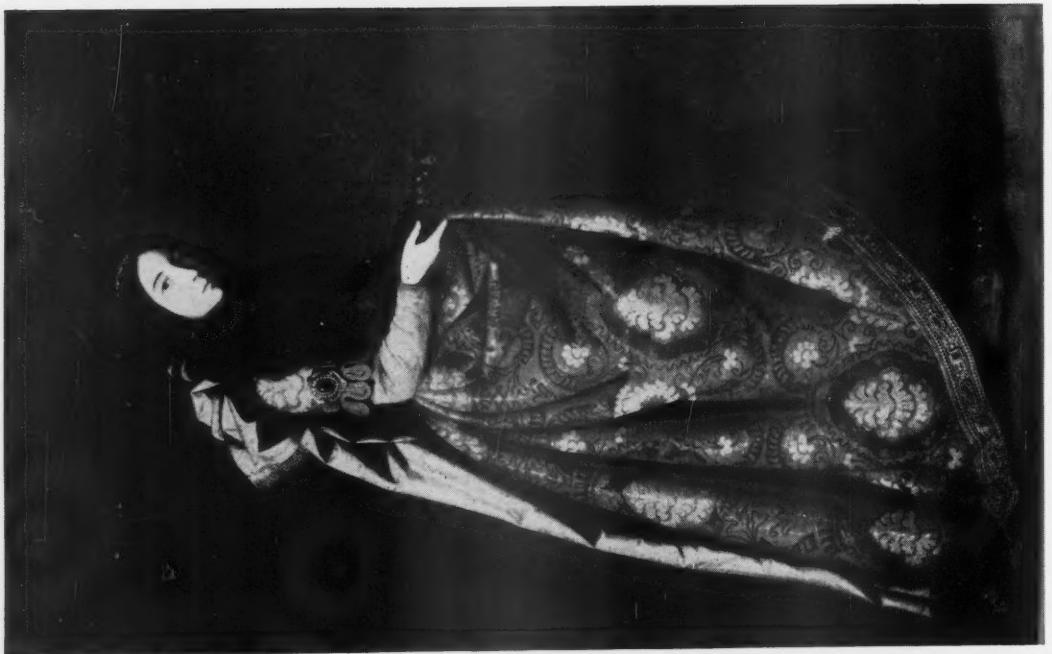


FIG. 4. FRANCISCO DE ZURBARÁN; ST. ELIZABETH
Van Horne Collection, Montreal

the Andalusian *joie de vivre* and the opulence of Murillo, Zurbaran's painting is ennobled by qualities that emanate from his native soil of Extremadura. He combines viril mysticism with ascetic humility. His monumental Madonna moves us by the painter's reserve and sincerity. These more spiritual qualities in the works of Zurbaran may perhaps require greater conscious effort on the part of the non-Spanish spectator than the easy flowing grace of Murillo.

As to the date of Zurbaran's *Virgin and Child with a Fruit Dish*, it is related to works of the transition from his mystic period to what I have called his solemn or sustained style.⁴ From his late mystic period are the *Vision of Father Salmerón at Guadalupe*,⁵ the *Christ as Salvator Mundi*, in the Parcent Collection, Madrid, both of 1638, and the *Christ Blessing St. Joseph* in the Seville Museum.⁶ The face of the Cintas Madonna possesses the same mystic sweetness as the countenance of Christ in these three paintings. The *Christ Blessing St. Joseph*, moreover, shares with the Cintas painting not only this mood of gentleness but also, in strong contrast thereto, the feeling of strength brought about by the monumental use of drapery and the metallic tension of the folds. Another work probably also done around 1638, the *Madonna of the Duke of Osuna*,⁷ designed by Zurbaran but perhaps executed by assistants, is similar to the Cintas painting in the Virgin's facial type and in the arrangement of the traditional red gown, and the dark blue mantle with the transparent neck veil. The stocky Child holding an apple is also of a similar type. An even closer relationship than with these paintings of the late 1630's exists, however, between the Cintas Madonna and the feminine Saints and Madonnas Zurbaran did in the first half of the following decade. These paintings of his solemn or sustained style, such as *St. Apollonia*, Louvre, *St. Elizabeth*, Van Horne Collection, Montreal (Fig. 4), and *St. Rufina*, Hispanic Society of America, New York, were apparently done after the same model as was the Cintas Madonna, because not only the facial expression, but the actual structure of the face is the same. In all of them occurs the same round head with a fine straight nose, rather long than short, below a high forehead; thin eyebrows, a small mouth, a long jaw, dark eyes and hair. A *terminus ante quem*, on the other hand, is provided by the *Madonna of the Rosary*, Seville Museum, which shows the two figures

⁴*Gazette des Beaux Arts*, March 1944.

⁵Reproduced in *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, March 1944.

⁶Reproduced in *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, March 1944.

⁷In his collection at Espejo, Province of Cordoba, Spain.



FIG. 5. FRANCISCO REINA: ST. PETER PASQUAL,
BISHOP OF JAÉN
Museum of Paintings, Seville



FIG. 6. ANTONIO DEL CASTILLO SAAVEDRA: ABIGAIL
Ringling Museum, Sarasota, Florida

in the same position as in the Cintas painting but slightly more *en face*. In both paintings the arm and both hands of the Virgin are held in the same way and the horizontal folds at the bottom of the skirt match those of the Virgin's mantle in the Cintas Madonna. Yet the expression of the face has become even more gentle, the Seville painting is apparently more advanced and was done, in my opinion, between 1645-1650. This date is surely too late for the *Virgin and Child with a Fruit Dish*. The close relationship between this painting and works of the late 1630's and the even closer connection to the feminine Saints of the first half of the 1640's, induce me to date the painting in the Cintas Collection between the years 1640 and 1645.



FIG. 7. FRANCISCO AND MIGUEL POLANCO: FLIGHT INTO EGYPT
Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo, Ohio

II

It was the aim of the preceding paragraphs to contribute to an understanding of Zurbaran's art through the presentation of a characteristic painting by that master. In order further to clarify his style it may be well to illustrate and to discuss briefly some works hitherto erroneously attributed to Zurbaran. Among them are some paintings by his pupils, others are by contemporary Spanish artists not related to him, and finally I shall deal with a few portraits of the Italian school which erroneously have been attributed to the Spanish master.

In the Museum at Seville hangs a simplified copy of Zurbaran's portrait of the Mercedarian Saint Carmelo, Bishop of Teruel, at the church of Sta. Barbara, Madrid. A companion piece also at the Seville Museum of another Mercedarian, hitherto not fully identified, represents St. Peter Pasqual, Bishop of Jaén (Fig. 5).⁸ Neither of these two paintings is inci-

⁸He died a martyr's death in Granada on December 6, 1300, decapitated by the Moors, and was sanctified in 1670. (See Fray José Rodríguez, *Biblioteca Valentina*, Valencia, 1747, pp. 10-13, especially p. 11).

sive enough to be by Zurbaran. A study of the faces and folds leads me to attribute them to his pupil Francisco Reina (†1659), since they are closely related in style to the latter's scenes from the life of St. Peter Nolasco at Seville Cathedral.⁹ It may be well to record that Sentenach was surely wrong when he declared to be copies all but one of Zurbaran's five Mercedarian portraits in the Academy of Fine Arts of San Fernando at Madrid and the one at Sta. Barbara, and the two inferior ones at the Seville Museum to be splendid originals by the master.¹⁰ Mayer also praised these two school pieces as possessing "far greater buoyancy" than the original, and failed to recognize that they were only the work of the pupil Reina.¹¹ A third Mercedarian portrait of this series is in the Museum at Pau, France, apparently also done by Reina.¹²

Other assistants of Zurbaran, probably the brothers Francisco and Miguel Polanco, painted the *Flight into Egypt* (Fig. 7) at the Museum of Toledo, Ohio. The style of the painting is very inferior to the master's in the handling of the folds and in the modeling of the faces. On the other hand it exhibits close parallels with the *Apostolado* by the Polancos at the Seville Museum. It is influenced by Zurbaran's paintings at Grenoble of 1638, which is thus the earliest possible date for the Toledo painting. Already Waagen had called it "too feeble for Zurbaran."¹³ The *Flight into Egypt* was nevertheless included as by the master in the Spanish Exhibition of 1940 at the Toledo Museum of Art and is still so attributed.¹⁴

In the Ringling Museum at Sarasota, Florida, are two feminine figures glorifying the Sacrament of the Eucharist. One, Abigail (Fig. 6), carrying a basket full of bread and fruit, is shown venerating the Holy Communion cup with the Host. The other, St. Clare of Assisi, holding a loaf of bread, is adoring a monstrance, her usual attribute.¹⁵ Abigail, the woman who pacified and later married King David (Samuel, 25.1) was not infrequently represented by Spanish painters of the seventeenth century. She is clearly identified by an inscription at the lower left wherein her gifts to David

⁹See my article, *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, January 1944.

¹⁰In *Boletin de la sociedad española de excusiones*, 1913-14, vol. XXI, p. 5.

¹¹A. L. Mayer, *Historia de la pintura española*, Madrid, 1942, p. 335.

¹²Reproduced by P. Lafond, *Revue de l'art ancien et moderne*, May 1899, vol. V, p. 421.

¹³Waagen, *Art Treasures in Great Britain*, 1854, vol. II, p. 458.

¹⁴Reproduced as Zurbarán by J. Gudiol, *Spanish Painting, The Toledo Museum of Art*, 1940, p. 108, with the improbable date of 1630, and by A. L. Mayer, *Pintura española*, Barcelona, 1926, p. 150, pl. XLI.

¹⁵This figure was reproduced by P. Lafond, *Les Arts*, February 1908, vol. VII, p. 27, as a Sybil by Zurbarán when the painting was still in the Zuloaga collection. Mayer, *Historia de la pintura española*, p. 346, calls it doubtful. For the iconography, see E. Mâle, *L'art religieux d'après le concile de Trente*, Paris, 1932, p. 489.



FIG. 8. JUAN SANCHEZ COTAN: FRAY MIGUEL DEL POZO
Hispanic Society of America, New York

FIG. 9. DANIELE CRESPI: CARTHUSIAN PROCURATOR
Hispanic Society of America, New York

are compared to the Holy Bread and Wine of the Eucharist. St. Clare, the founder of the Poor Clares of the Second Order of St. Francis, wears with a worldly dress the dark veil, lined in white, of her Order. The two paintings can be connected only indirectly with the style of Zurbaran, to whom they have been attributed ever since they were in the collection of Ignacio de Zuloaga. They should instead be given to Zurbaran's pupil Antonio del Castillo Saavedra (1616-1668), on the basis of the many drawings the artist left us, and of his two paintings of the patron Saints of Cordova, St. Acisclo and St. Victoria, published by F. J. Sanchez Cantón.¹⁶ Characteristic of Castillo is not only the style in general, but also such details as the modeling of the folds, the facial type, the cartouche with the putto, and the spiral curves of the lettering in Castillo's own handwriting. The two paintings come in all probability from the Convent of St. Clare at Cordova, Castillo's home town.

We are led beyond the circle of Zurbaran's pupils by a work almost certainly done by the Carthusian monk Fray Juan Sanchez Cotan (1561-1627) of Granada, who was celebrated chiefly for his still lifes. It represents the Mercedarian monk Fray Miguel del Pozo (Fig. 8),¹⁷ whose name

¹⁶Dated 1650. See *Archivo español de arte y arqueología*, 1937, vol. XIII, no. 38, p. 159.

¹⁷A native of Málaga whose biography was written by the Mercedarian Fray José García Palomo (1770-1841) in an unpublished manuscript at that town. See J. A. Gari y Siumell, *Bibliotheca mercedaria*, Barcelona, 1875, p. 118.

appears on a piece of paper at the upper left, together with the date 1630 and a signature F. Zurba(ra)n. This painting, in the Hispanic Society of America, New York, can in my opinion not be given to Zurbaran since its style does not conform at all to his way of arranging a figure, nor to his modeling of drapery, folds, faces, or hands. The signature is entirely unlike the autograph of the master, who always signed Francisco (or F.) de Zurbaran, and looks like an eighteenth century addition. I feel, therefore, free to disregard the signature, as well as the date of 1630. The painting is inferior to, and very different from, the four portraits proper and the six posthumous Mercedarian effigies which can be given to Zurbaran with certainty. My attribution to Sanchez Cotan is made on the basis of two figures of Saints, representing St. John the Baptist and St. Bruno, at the Museum of Granada. Stylistic parallels exist also to other paintings by the master, whom we know to have been active also on other occasions for the Mercedarians, executing a *Vision of St. Francis*, signed and dated in 1620, for the Mercedarian monastery at Seville.

The Hispanic Society of America also possesses another portrait of a monk hitherto attributed to Zurbaran (Fig. 9). Representing a seated Carthusian, it is not only one of the finest paintings in that collection but has long been considered one of the key paintings by the Spanish master. Grave doubts about the correctness of the attribution arise immediately because of the fact that the sitter is holding a letter with the following Italian inscription: "Molto R(everendo) Sig(nore) mio Oss(ervantissi)mo. La carica d(e) V(ostra) P(aternità) : M(olto) R(everenda) : Pro(....) tiene di procurator con . . . costi la." While the letter shows that the sitter was a *procurator*, that is, administrator of domestic affairs in an Italian monastery, it neither corroborates nor contradicts the traditional identification of the monk as a Carthusian which is fully supported by the Carthusian type of the robe.

As to the authorship of Zurbaran, no valid reason has been advanced to explain why a portrait by him should be inscribed in Italian.¹⁸ The Procurator is represented three-quarter length. All portraits or portrait figures in the entire oeuvre of Zurbaran are, however, full-length. Even in his religious scenes barely half a dozen figures occur which are less than full-length. Nothing beyond the fact that a white robed monk is portrayed has lured art critics to link the Procurator with the name of Zur-

¹⁸The painting comes from the collection of Sir George Donaldson, London, who also owned other Italian paintings wrongly attributed to Spanish masters. Among them was a picture of *Two Little Girls* attributed to Velázquez which H. Voss gave back to Sebastiano Mazzoni (1615-1685) (see *Jahrbuch der preussischen Kunstsammlungen*, 1932, vol. LIII, no. 1, p. 54).

baran. Any alleged facial resemblance between the Hispanic Society painting and two portraits by the Spanish master, a Fray Jerónimo Pérez in the Academy of Fine Arts of San Fernando, Madrid, of the early 1630's, and a Doctor of Law, Gardner Museum, Boston, of the 1650's, is superficial and is not supported by stylistic analysis. The subjects of Zurbaran's portraits are self-contained, introverted, and painted with psychological penetration. The thoughts and the emotions of the Procurator are on the surface and his face is less profound in character representation. Zurbaran's portraits possess a transparency and lucid clarity in rendition, and a unified over-all lighting greatly wanting in the Carthusian. That portrait also lacks the aerial perspective, the atmospheric recession, and the pictorial unity evoked by Zurbaran's works as early as 1630, although these qualities are more pronounced in his later periods. In the New York painting all light and shadow transitions in countenance and drapery are very soft, as against Zurbaran's always well defined borders between areas of light and shade. The hand of the Monk is too compact in shape and too fluid in outline to be by Zurbaran who liked to give each finger an independent, expressive gesture. Not even a trace of his characteristic style can be discovered in the folds which with their numerous halftones, their wavy shadows and their lack of order are far removed from the master's drapery, always precise and clear-cut, and which have none of his mystic power.

Casting about for a likely painter of the Italian school who could have done the fine portrait in New York, one is naturally drawn to the school of Naples by its Caravaggesque character. Careful investigation, however, did not turn up any Neapolitan master who could have painted it. I was resigned to reproduce the portrait as by an anonymous Italian Caravaggiesco when a letter from the distinguished Austrian scholar Dr. Otto Benesch of Harvard University to whom I had sent detailed photographs, led to the Milanese school and in particular to Daniele Crespi.¹⁹ Milan, like Naples, was for centuries under Spanish rule, and the artistic relations between both towns and the Iberic Peninsula were mutual and profound. A Milanese, Maino, may have had much to do with the early flowering of Caravaggio's style in Spain. Of numerous Neapolitan and

¹⁹Dr. Benesch wrote: "Concerning the portrait of the Monk, I agree with you. It is evidently Italian, else the letter in his hands would not be in Italian. I would rather consider it as a work by a North Italian than a Neapolitan. It has a warmth in its color scale which deviates from the pitch black of the Neapolitans. It reminds me of Milanese Baroque painters. Daniele Crespi did portraits of monastics. I am sorry that I can't be more precise. . . . You may quote my opinion, if it's worth quoting at all in its negativeness."

I wish to acknowledge my great obligation to Dr. Benesch for these most helpful remarks on the painting.

Milanese painters, including Crespi, it has been said that they painted in the Spanish manner, and many of their works have long been erroneously attributed to Spanish artists. The Milanese school, in fact, presents close affinities to the painting in the Hispanic Society and it soon became evident that Daniele Crespi (1600-1630), all of whose portraits are half or three-quarter length was indeed the author of the Carthusian. Crespi and his whole family died in Milan in the plague of 1630.²⁰ In April 1629 he signed his famous frescoes in the church of the Carthusian monastery of Garegnano at Milan where he had decorated the large ceiling and the side walls of the nave with Carthusian scenes and many portraits of Carthusian Saints.²¹ In 1630, shortly before his death, he repeated this performance in the choir of the Certosa of Pavia.²² The frescoes at Garegnano are in very bad condition, but the few Pavia paintings available in reproductions, such as a *Via Crucis* and some Carthusian Saints, show close connections to the Hispanic Society portrait. Typical late works by Crespi are the *Last Supper* and *Via Crucis*, both in the Brera, Milan, as well as a *Dream of Joseph*, in Vienna. Also related to the Procurator are a *Portrait of a Sculptor*, Brera, another of *Manfredo Settala*, Ambrosiana, Milan, a drawing of a Carthusian Saint in the Uffizi, and a *Selfportrait with his Family*, dated 1630, in the Della Morte Collection, Milan.²³

With Zurbaran and many other Baroque painters Crespi shared the severe and monumental spirit and the emphasis on three-dimensional form. Crespi achieved this sculptural plasticity through vigorous, almost brutal modeling of the flesh and through the enveloping action of the soft and ample drapery. The impression of brutality suggested by Crespi's paintings comes as much from his bold à la prima technique, predestinating him for fresco work, as from his lack of subtlety and of strict and thoughtful order. Zurbaran would have recoiled before the extrovert directness

²⁰On Crespi see the monograph by G. Nicodemi, *Daniele Crespi*, Milan, 1930. Nicodemi, p. 33, published evidence which shifts Crespi's birth year from 1590 to 1600. A drawing of Christ Victor by Crespi, in the Albertina, Vienna, has an eighteenth century inscription: "Daniele Crespi né 1600."

²¹Nicodemi, *l. c.*, pp. 114-116. These portraits were all painted from live models; see Nicodemi, pp. 101-102 for a description of their style. Other frescoes at Garegnano had been executed thirty years earlier by Simone Peterzano, the author of the *Carthusian Monk* in the Sir Francis Cook Collection, Richmond, England, also for some time wrongly attributed to Zurbarán.

²²See Nicodemi, *l. c.*, pp. 103-104 and pp. 134-136. Also C. Magenta, *La Certosa de Pavia*, Milan, 1897, pp. 372-376.

²³All reproduced in Nicodemi's monograph. The inventory of Crespi's possessions made after his demise mentions "uno ritratto d'uno Reverendo divotto finito se non la faccia," and "una effigie d'uno padre certosino apesa ad un telaro grande di tela tinta per pingere," Nicodemi, *l. c.*, pp. 51-52. These two unfinished portraits show that Crespi painted other Carthusian monks shortly before his death. Drawings of Carthusians by Crespi are in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana and in the Castillo Sforzesco, Milan, see Nicodemi, *l. c.*, pp. 127 and 130.

with which the Procurator addresses himself to the spectator. Dramatic movement, characteristic for Crespi in all his works, is enhanced by the use of restless, flickering light, and is sometimes further heightened by the action of the figures. In the Procurator action is suggested by the pose and the bold thrust of the right arm. The chiaroscuro contrasts of the face and of the numerous folds varying in shape, direction and light value increase the movement to such a degree that neither face nor folds seem to obey a unified plan. In the portrait of Manfredo Settala and in the Procurator we observe exactly the same strong lights at the left temple, beneath the eye at the left, at the back of the nose, and lobe-shaped at the chin, which are heightened in effect by the deep shadows around the eye, under the nose and lower lip and at the corner of the mouth. The heads of the Family portrait, the St. Joseph, the Apostle heads of the *Last Supper*, and the Christ of the *Flagellation*, Silvio Crespi Collection, Milan, are similar in distribution of light and shade. The hand of the Procurator resembles that of the boy at the lower left of the Family portrait. Numerous painters, obviously, used a somewhat undulating line in drawing fingers or folds, but the peculiar wavy outline of the little finger of the Procurator's right hand is typical of Crespi and exists in precisely the same way in the hands of the Virgin and of Christ in the Brera *Via Crucis*. The wavy shadows, often shaped like fingers, of his folds are even more characteristic; compare, for instance, the finger-shaped shadow-crease in the elbow of the Procurator and the numerous folds in the Brera paintings and the Vienna St. Joseph painted so exactly and unmistakably alike as to clinch the attribution. The linear edge of the Carthusian's robe can be duplicated curve by curve in the latter three paintings.

There is thus not a brushstroke, a line, a shadow, or a highlight in the New York painting that could not be matched in other works by Daniele Crespi. The Carthusian Procurator, a cuckoo's egg in the nest of Zurbaran, should go far toward reestablishing the reputation of Crespi. It is another bit of evidence for the close, mutual relations between Italian and Spanish Baroque. The painting is related to the Pavia frescoes, is very advanced in style and presages a probable turn to a quieter and more monumental mood had the artist lived longer. The picture should be placed as late in Crespi's career as possible and may well represent the Procurator of the Certosa of Pavia in the year 1630.

Another Italian painting portraying a young girl which has been erroneously attributed to Zurbaran was formerly in Hanover and is now in the

Museum at Copenhagen.²⁴ It is in reality a replica or a copy of a fully signed portrait of Donna Laura Chigi in the Chigi Palace at Ariccia, painted by Alessandro Mattia da Farnese (1631-after 1679). I mention this painting because the companion piece to the Ariccia painting was reproduced by Mayer as a *Portrait of a Young Girl*, supposedly Zurbaran's daughter,²⁵ and entered under this title and attribution the St. Diego Museum of Art (cover). The painting represents in fact Agostino Chigi, Laura Chigi's brother, in 1664, at the age of two. A copy of the St. Diego painting, inscribed with the name of the child, is still at Ariccia. These data were convincingly published by G. Incisa della Rocchetta almost fifteen years ago,²⁶ but most writers, apparently unaware of the publication, continue to give the Chigi children to Zurbaran, disregarding the fact that their style is entirely different from that of the Sevillian master.

Nothing to do with Zurbaran have the *Two Sisters with a Dog*, also called the *Daughters of Juan de Ruelas*, in the Ogden M. Reid Collection, New York,²⁷ a painting which Mayer considered to be a Zurbaran and "among the finest works of the whole seventeenth century," when it was still in dealer's hands.²⁸ The painting is an almost exact copy of the lower right section of an earlier portrait, once in the V. G. Fischer Galleries, Washington, D. C.,²⁹ which shows a Lady with her three daughters, all in lace collars and elaborate Italian dresses of the first quarter of the seventeenth century. As far as one can see from a poor reproduction it looks characteristically Italian, perhaps Milanese, rather than Spanish. The *Two Sisters with a Dog* in the Reid Collection are probably also Italian, and painted not long after 1650 to judge by the dress and the brushwork. In the same collection there is a fine standing *Boy in Red*, also given to Zurbaran, but more likely to be an Italian work of the Florentine or Milanese schools. It probably represents a member of the Roman Altemps family, Dukes of Gallese, since it was for generations in their possession. Neither by Zurbaran nor by Alessandro Mattia is the very good *Portrait of a Lady as St. Elizabeth*, R. Smith-Barry Collection, London. Both artists

²⁴Published as Zurbarán by H. Kehrer, *Zeitschrift fuer bildende Kunst*, 1920-21, vol. LV, p. 249, and A. L. Mayer, *Historia de la pint. esp.*, p. 345.

²⁵A. L. Mayer, *Historia de la pint. esp.*, p. 345 (erroneously as in Kansas City).

²⁶See his article "Di Alessandro Mattia, Pittore da Farnese," in *Rivista del R. Istituto d'archeologia e storia dell'arte*, 1929, vol. I, no. 3, pp. 378-392, and the summary in *Cahiers d'Art*, 1929, vol. IV, no. 8-9, p. 424.

²⁷I wish to acknowledge my deep obligation to Mr. and Mrs. Ogden M. Reid for their courtesy in allowing me to study their collection.

²⁸Reproduced by Mayer as Zurbarán in *Historia de la pint. esp.*, p. 345, fig. 262.

²⁹Reproduced as a work by Alonso Sánchez Coello in the *New York Daily Tribune* of January 24, 1909.

have been suggested, but the Zurbaran attribution was rightly rejected years ago by Herbert Cook.³⁰ It seems to me to be a work of the Florentine school. A Young Man in the Myron C. Taylor Collection, New York, is certainly not by Zurbaran but by some Florentine follower of Bronzino. The Child with a Flower in the collection of Mrs. Hamilton Morgan, New York, dated 1646, published as by Zurbaran by Mayer³¹ seems to belong to the school of Urbino or of Parma. Finally, Morton Bernath³² published as by Zurbaran an Unknown Male Portrait in a Swiss collection which in spite of the strange signature must be given to the North Italian or perhaps even the Swiss school.

³⁰H. Cook, *Boletin de la sociedad española de excusiones*, 1907, vol. XV, p. 103. The painting was exhibited as by Mattia in the show of European Painting of the Seventeenth Century, Royal Academy, London, 1937.

³¹A. L. Mayer, *Burlington Magazine*, 1922, vol. XLI, p. 42, and *Historia de la pintura esp.*, p. 345.

³²M. Bernath, *Burlington Magazine*, 1926, vol. XLVI, p. 32.

THE ACTIVITIES OF LIOTARD — "LE TURC" (1702-1789)

BY FREDERICK B. ROBINSON

Museum of Fine Arts, Springfield, Massachusetts

A hitherto unpublished portrait by Jean Etienne Liotard recently acquired by the Springfield Museum of Fine Arts calls to mind the romantic and adventurous career of this Franco-Swiss artist whose life was so closely intertwined with that of 18th century royalty and nobility. For those of wealth and position it was a century redolent with gaiety and color. This same atmosphere pervades the Springfield Museum's painting. The charm and delicacy of the youthful subject as she practices her scales in front of an 18th century dressing table glass is enhanced by the delicate tones of dress, scarf and hair ribbon. Pinks, lavenders and blues in combination seem unmistakably French and the delicacy of their handling is comparable to the pastelist's art. This is as it should be for Liotard, although born in Switzerland in 1702, was of French extraction and worked in Paris as a pupil of J. B. Masse, the miniaturist, and F. Lemoyne, the pastelist, from 1725-28. Indeed, the vast majority of works by Liotard are pastels, few works being recorded in oil, which gives added interest to the Museum's new acquisition. That the painting, too, seems to carry out a hope suggested by the early American painter, John Singleton Cop-



JEAN ETIENNE LIOTARD: GIRL WITH MIRROR
Museum of Fine Arts, Springfield

ley, in a letter to Liotard (quoted below) adds still greater interest to this rare oil by the Franco-Swiss artist:

Sir,

"Boston, Sep'r. 30, 1872.

This letter will meet You accompanied by one from the Worthy Coll:¹ Spierring who has been so kind to give me his assistance for the obtaining a sett of the best Swis Crayons for drawing of Portraits. allow me Sir to Joyn my sollicitations with him that You would send as He directs one sett of Crayons of the very best kind such as You can recommend (for) liveliness of color and Justness of tints. In a word let em be a sett of the very best that can be got.

You may perhaps be surprised that so remote a corner of the Globe as New England should have any d(e)mand for the necessary eutensils for practiceing the fine arts, but I assure You Sir however feeble our efforts may be, it is not for want of inclination that they are not better, but the want of opportunity to improve ourselves. however America which has been the seat of war and desolation, I would fain hope will one Day become the School of Fine Arts and Monsieur Liotard(s) Drawing with Justice be set as patterns for our immitation. not that I have ever had the advantage of beholding any one of those rare peices from Your hand, but (have) formd a Judgment on the true tast of several of My friend(s) who has seen em.

permit me Sir to conclude with wishing You all Helth and happyness."¹

During the artist's first Paris period his subjects included such personalities as Monsieur Pierre-Philippe Cannac, later the Seigneur de St. Legier, and his wife, done in 1733, and the French writers Fontenelle and Voltaire. By 1735 Liotard left Paris to travel through Italy in the company of the French Ambassador to the Court of Naples. In 1738 Pope Clement XII had heard of this young portraitist's excellence and he was summoned to Rome where he duly portrayed the Pope and several of the Cardinals. The same year, having met some of the young Englishmen always to be found at that time in Rome on their "Grand Tours," he was invited to sail to Constantinople with the young Lord Duncannon, William Ponsonby, later the second Earl of Bessborough. The five years there were to affect a considerable portion of his later life. Fascinated by the East, he grew a full and flowing beard and adopted Turkish dress, winning for him on his return to Europe the sobriquet, "Le Turc." Vienna in 1742 saw him a favorite of the court of the Emperor Francis I and the Empress Maria Theresa, whose portraits he did along with those of the rest of the royal family and many of the nobility. In 1744 his self-portrait showing him with the so-called Turkish beard and in Eastern costume was included in the Gallery of Painters' Portraits in the Uffizi. Of almost universal fame, particularly in America, is the painting which he did the following

¹From *Letters and Papers of John Singleton Copley and Henry Pelham, 1739-1776*. Published by The Massachusetts Historical Society, 1914.

year in Vienna (1745) entitled, *Vienna Chocolate Girl*, now in the Royal Gallery in Dresden. For years Americans have been familiar with this charming pastel through its reproduction as the trade mark on the Walter Baker chocolate tins.

From Vienna the artist returned once more to Paris (1746). Having painted the portrait of the French Marshall, Maurice de Saxony (now in the Ryksmuseum), he was introduced by that gentleman to the court at Versailles. The King was portrayed as well as the Dauphin, his wife, Marie Joseph de Saxe, the six daughters of Louis XV, and his granddaughter, Isabelle. Now hanging in the Dresden Gallery is his famous *Belle Liseuse* bought at that time by the Duc de Richelieu. A replica of this, also by Liotard, is in the Ryksmuseum.

It was at this time that criticism of his work for its unusual naturalism was made by Madame Pompadour, little realizing when she did so that her objections are precisely the reason for contemporary appreciation of his work. Of this aspect of Liotard's work, C. F. Bell wrote, "Liotard was one of the earliest and most daring pioneers of naturalism, and most of his work is, on this account, astoundingly modern in appearance."

To London in 1735 went Liotard where his vogue during his two-year stay duplicated the Paris period. Commissioned to portray the Prince (later George III) and the Princess of Wales, the nobility followed suit as did his English friends of the Italian and Turkish trips. At the time, Joshua Reynolds, then just beginning his career, is quoted as saying, "the only merit in Liotard's pictures is neatness, which as a general rule, is the characteristic of a low genius, or rather, no genius at all." One of the finer works done on this English visit is a genre group comparable to the *Chocolate Girl* entitled, *The Early Breakfast*, now the property of Lord Sefton at Croxteth. Particularly interesting, too, is the painting *Le Déjeuner*, formerly in the Golding Palmer Collection, which shows a quality of treatment reminiscent of the work of Chardin, a characteristic which is also noticeable in the Museum's new acquisition.

One of Liotard's most ardent admirers, attested by the number of miniatures ordered, was Horace Walpole. Several portraits of this great Englishman are listed in the Strawberry Hill Sale in 1842. Today in the National Gallery hangs Liotard's *Portrait of a Man in Turkish Costume*, and the Victoria and Albert owns his *Sir Everard Fawkener*, while the British museum has two drawings.

By 1755 the artist was once again on the move, this time to Holland.

Here, in 1756, at the age of 54, he married a Dutch girl, Marie Fargues, of Amsterdam. Off came the famous beard, which to quote Horace Walpole was, "sacrificed to Hymen." However, a specially shaped casket was made to preserve it. Artist and wife soon returned to Geneva (1757), but not for long. Late in 1770 he visited Lyons where the French philosopher Rousseau sat to him, but refused to accept the portrait because of its too naturalistic rendering. The celebrated "friend of nature" seemed no less vain than Pompadour. In 1771 Liotard was in Paris once more, ordered by Maria Theresa, Empress of Austria to paint her daughter, Marie Antoinette, just become the wife of the Dauphin, later Louis XVI.

By 1772 he again visited London. He is listed in the Royal Academy the following year as showing, "five recent portraits." In 1774 still others were shown, including one of himself done in oils, which with the Springfield Museum's oil, are among the very few oils recorded.

Another portrait, which because of the arrangement of the figure and the similar use of a mirror for image reflection seems comparable to the Museum's painting, is that of the Viscount Mount Stuart, fourth Earl and first Marquis of Bute. The Viscount stands with his elbow leaning on a fireplace mantel so that the overmantel mirror reflects a profile view of his head and shoulders. The angle made by the shoulders both reflected and real is an admirable piece of perspective construction.

In 1774 the artist returned to Geneva, but his peripatetic habits could not be completely changed and occasional trips to the royal courts at Vienna, Italy and France ensued until his death in 1789. This was a month and two days before the French revolution was to eliminate much of the romantic and glittering scenes in which he had played so intimate a part.

Liotard was a pioneer in portraiture. The many pastel portraits done over such a long and full life vary, of course, in excellence. Nevertheless, most are striking in their outspoken frankness. As Lady Victoria Manners has said, "His likenesses in their vigour, force and vivacity, and truth to nature form at that date a new type of pictorial representation." The Springfield Museum's painting has these same qualities.²

²The foregoing is to a great extent dependent on the comments of N. S. Trivas and Lady Victoria Manners from the following articles:

"Liotard in France," THE CONNOISSEUR, Oct. 1940, p. 89, Vol. CVI, No. 469, N. S. Trivas.

"New Light on Liotard," THE CONNOISSEUR, May 1933, p. 294, Vol. XCI, Lady Victoria Manners.

"London Society Portrayed by Liotard," THE CONNOISSEUR, Vol. XCIX, Jan. 1937, p. 30, N. S. Trivas.

SHORTER NOTICES

SMALL RENAISSANCE SCULPTURE ON LOAN AT THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

A fortunate accident has brought together at the Art Institute of Chicago two loan exhibitions, which, taken together, fully illustrate the achievements of the Renaissance in the much neglected fields of small bronzes, medals and plaquettes. Dr. Wittmann's exquisitely chosen collection of statuettes, formerly in Budapest, was well known, as Dr. Planiscig published many of its main pieces.¹ Mr. Morgenroth's comprehensive collection of medals and plaquettes, also an exile from Europe, however, was known only by a few specialists until its showing last year at the Santa Barbara Museum. It is now available to the student through the catalogue written in occasion of its exhibition in Chicago.²

It is impossible here to attempt a survey of the material in these two collections. One example can aptly represent the Wittmann collection, a most exquisitely chased, gilt statuette of a woman, which seems to be of Paduan origin. As far as known, it is unique; and certainly the careful modeling and the delicate treatment of the details of face and hair set it quite apart from the usual dozen ware. It is an imitation of antiquity but not a slavish one, and it bears all the marks of the intensive study of nature characteristic for the Paduan bronze founders. One would like to credit with this work the young Riccio, who has included similar graceful figures in his *Mountains of Inferno*. On the other hand, the statuette resembles other Paduan statuettes, which have been variously attributed to Bellano³ or left anonymous.⁴ We know too little about these matters to hazard any serious guesses.

It is much more difficult with a few samples to convey an adequate impression of the Morgenroth collection. The famous medallists of the 15th and early 16th centuries are well represented. Among the Pisanello's the medal of Vittorino da Feltre certainly deserves the prize (illustrated). The collection includes rarities and one famous unique piece, the beautiful Venetian medal of Niccolò di Marco Giustiniani, which has graced former exhibitions, while it was still in the Heseltine collection. There is a fair representation of the medals of the later period, though one regrets

¹The exhibition includes: a door-knocker, repr. by L. Planiscig, *Andrea Riccio*, Vienna 1927, fig. 446-7; two figures similar to Planiscig fig. 73 and 285; a lamp similar to Planiscig fig. 233; a statuette similar to G. Nicodemi, *Bronzi minori del rinascimento italiano*, Milano (1933) p. 104; an inkstand reproduced by Planiscig, *Piccoli bronzi italiani del rinascimento*, Milano 1930, fig. 124. All these are by Riccio or his workshop. To the school of Riccio should also be attributed a relief, published by Planiscig, *Dedalo*, XII, 1932, p. 923 repr., which can be compared with two reliefs in the Dreyfus collection (S. de Ricci, *Reliefs and Plaquettes*, Oxford 1931, no. 119 and 138). Without definite attributions are the beautiful gilt statuette reproduced here as fig. 1, and a statuette of Jupiter, usually attributed to Francesco di Giorgio, but probably by a follower of Bertoldo.

²Ulrich Middeldorf and Oswald Goetz, *Medals and Plaquettes from the Sigmund Morgenroth Collection*, The Art Institute of Chicago, 1944.

³W. Bode, *Italienische Bronzestatuetten der Renaissance*, Small Edition, Berlin (1922), pls. 18, 19. ⁴Planiscig, *Riccio*, figs. 74, 76.



PISANELLO: MEDAL OF VITTORINO DA FELTRE
Morgenroth Collection, on loan at the Art Institute of Chicago

the absence of such great names as Jacopo da Trezzo and Leone Leoni, not to mention baroque medallists like Bernini and Soldani. It is a great pity that the entire later development of the art of the medal is left to the cares of a few great museums and that the private collector and the average museum refuse to recognize the perfection and the charm of the fine medals of the 17th and 18th centuries. There is no reason why in this field as in others, that is, prints and books we should be dazzled by the fascination of the *incunabula* to the detriment of everything else. Yet Mr. Morgenroth showed a keen appreciation of the variety in this field, when he admitted into his collection a considerable number of German medals, which in their intimacy differ so fundamentally from the monumental Italian medals.

There is not a trace of prejudice in Mr. Morgenroth's collection of plaquettes. It contains examples from practically every country and period. Side by side with the well known works by Moderno, Riccio, Belli, Floetner etc., we find such by Annibale Fontana, Guglielmo della Porta, Hans Peisser, Lorenz Rosenbaum. There are a great number of unique and unpublished pieces and rarities, such as a cast of the famous *Deposition* after Michelangelo. There is the only one of the so-called Haehnel Michelangelo models which has some claim to originality, the terracotta plaque of *Hercules and Atlas*. There is a relief of *Christ Carrying the Cross*, which possibly may be by Christoph Jamnitzer. There is a plaque with the mark of the Augsburg goldsmith Matthaeus Wallbaum, whose name now can be added to the long list of plaque makers or designers. The specialist as well as the layman can discover no end of interesting problems in this collection. Practically every artistic tendency of the period is represented. In order to demonstrate how strongly the various aspects of Renaissance art are reflected in these little objects, the exhibition has been supplemented by a number of photographs of drawings, prints, paintings which can be connected in one manner or the other with the medals and plaquettes. Thus these small sculptures of the Renaissance give a completer picture of the complexity of their period than any exhibition of larger works ever could.

— ULRICH MIDDELDORF, Art Institute of Chicago

MEDALS AND PLAQUETTES FROM THE SIGMUND MORGENROTH COLLECTION. By Ulrich Middeldorf and Oswald Goetz. Chicago, The Art Institute of Chicago, 1944. 64 pages, 32 plates.

There are few books on artistic subjects that are more helpful to the connoisseur and the art historian than a well-planned, informative catalogue of an important public or private collection. This is especially true of a good catalogue of a collection that is entirely composed of examples of one particular art, such as the *Catalogue of the Italian Sculpture in the Victoria and Albert Museum* by Sir Eric Maclagen and Miss Longhurst, and Mr. George F. Hill's *Catalogue Raisonné of the Dreyfus collection of Renaissance medals*.

A noteworthy example of this type of book is *Medals and Plaquettes from the Sigmund Morgenroth Collection* by Ulrich Middeldorf and Oswald Goetz which has just been published by the Art Institute of Chicago.

Not very long ago there were in Europe many intelligent collectors of medals and plaquettes. In England, for example, in the twenty years that preceded the First World War, there were several collectors of such things, men of fine taste, such as Heseltine, George Salting, Whitcombe-Greene and Henry Oppenheimer. Whilst on the continent there were such men as Adalbert von Lanna and that prince of collectors, Gustave Dreyfus. It is to be regretted that, as the authors of the Morgenroth catalogue deplore, "few if any collections of note covering this field have been made in this country," and that "the public at large has had little opportunity, on this side of the Atlantic, to know and enjoy these fascinating memorabilia of one of the greatest . . . of all art epochs."

"A daily habitude worthy of man's adoption," writes Goethe, "would be some reading of the Scriptures or Homer, the hearing of a little good music, and," he adds, "the contemplation of a few medals."

The keen, discriminating collecting of medals and plaquettes affords a fine training for the eye of the connoisseur, and has the highest artistic interest. He who pursues it acquires not only a store of pleasurable memories, but also gains, at the same time, a considerable amount of knowledge of history, mythology and iconology.

It was in order to stimulate an intelligent interest in this art that Professor Ulrich Middeldorf, one of the leading authorities on the Renaissance, has devoted much time and thought to the making of this catalogue of a collection of plaquettes and medals that was recently on exhibition at the Art Institute of Chicago. The Morgenroth collection contains one hundred and seventy-eight medals and two hundred and forty-nine plaquettes, of which, of course, by far the greater number are of Italian origin; though there are to be found in it also some outstanding works of the leading German medallists of the sixteenth century.

It is to be hoped that Professor Middeldorf's efforts will be successful, and that some men of taste in this country will decide to follow the example of Mr. Sigmund Morgenroth, and will make worth-while collections of medals and plaquettes, for their own pleasure and for the enjoyment of future generations of their fellow-countrymen.

— R. LANGTON DOUGLAS, New York City

